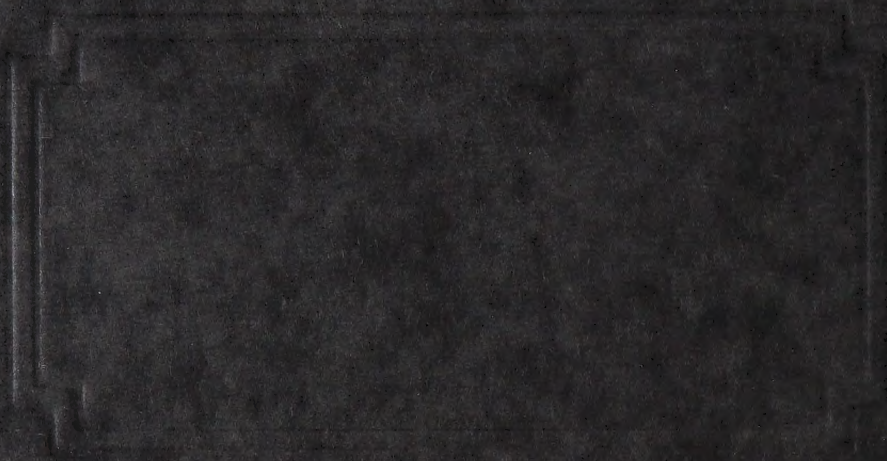


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COMBINED NORMAN WELLS -
FORT NORMAN PORT-A-POOL
REPORT

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THE COMBINED NORMAN WELLS-FORT NORMAN,
PORT-A-POOL REPORT

Respectfully submitted to:

- Norman Wells Recreation Club
- Fort Norman Community Club
- Canadian Red Cross Society
Water Safety Division
- Government of the Northwest Territories
Recreation Division

By: Tom Collier,
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Rocky Mountain House, Alberta.

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INTRODUCTION:

My arrival in Norman Wells on May 11 was preceded by a Red Cross Water Safety Conference in Yellowknife on May 2 and 3. After the conference I spent the following week in Fort Smith with Walter Scott.

CONSTRUCTION:

When I did finally make it to Norman Wells I was met by Recreation Club President, Dave Brannick. I was presented with the happy news that the pool framework had been put together. However when I viewed the work completed I pointed out that the pool had been put in upside down. This was of course due to the fact that no assembly instructions were available to them. Nevertheless we forged ahead undaunted and the framework was assembled by 9:30 p.m. I had been in town for seven hours and already I was about two days ahead of schedule.

During the remainder of the week the pool liner was installed, the pipes fitted and the electricity hooked up. A few new angles were used this year concerning the above tasks.

First of all the easy insertion of the liner was facilitated by use of a Herman-Nelson heater. Heat ducts were run under the air bubble and because the heat was retained by the bubble the temperature rose to 70 or 75 degrees. I had the help of four youthful volunteers and we did not have

to stretch the liner very much at all to make the corners fit. However on arrival the morning after I found that because of the cold weather the liner had contracted and we had to use Tony's corner patches as he had the year before.

Regarding the pipe fitting there was a new setup this year, because of the air bubble the heater was placed outside the bubble so that extra lengths of pipe were required. The pipes were run underneath the air bubble ballast bags and this worked very successfully.

Finally everything was hooked up and ready to go but due to the large amount of dirt and fine silt that was in the town water supply we had to wait about a week until we could get some alum put into the pool to aid the sand filter. Nevertheless we were all hooked up, plugged in, and filtered out by May 20 so that's when the program started.

Showers were hooked up outside the Rec. Hall and sidewalk was laid from a new door that was cut in the side of the building. Electric power came from a panel put up on the side of the Rec. Hall and run to the top of the building where it was connected to the power lines entering the Rec. Hall.

PROGRAM:


Registration forms were hung in the Post Office and Recreation Hall bulletin boards for one week and then classes were organized.

There was heavy enrollment in pre-beginner, beginner and junior courses so that there were four combined pre-beginner, beginner classes and two junior classes, one intermediate class and one senior class.

There were 38 beginners, 7 juniors, 3 intermediates and 3 seniors, thereby making a total registration of 51.

Lessons were held after school, after supper in the early evening, and on Saturday mornings. Each class received 3 lessons per week on alternate days. The total number of lessons for each class was therefore 16 lessons. Ladies swimming was held Monday through Friday at 9:00 a.m. and again on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mothers and tots although not heavily registered brought about 6 tots from 4 or 5 families to the pool on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:00 a.m. till 11:00 a.m. The Tuesday and Thursday gap at this time slot was filled by Mrs. Lena Green who brought the pre-schoolers for free swimming. This was very gratifying. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the school kids came in for free swimming from 1:00 p.m. till 3:00 p.m. Public swimming was held Saturdays and Sundays from 1:00 till 4:00 p.m.

The ladies' attendance, although not massive, consisted of 3 or 4 dedicated regulars and it was very good to see them come day after day.



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Attendance was very good and I would estimate that in the lessons there was an average of from 90% to 95% attendance. This I attribute to the presence of the air bubble and the natural keenness of the kids. Approximately 12 kids either moved away or flew "out" before they were ready for the tests.

The number of successful candidates for the tests are as follows:

Registered	Tested	Passed	% Pass of those Registered	% Pass of those Tested
39 Pre-Beginners	24	15	39%	63%
3 Beginners	3	3	100%	100%
7 Juniors	7	4	57%	57%
3 Intermediates	3	1	33%	33%
2 Seniors	2	2	100%	100%
54 (Total)	39	25	46%	64%

WATER TREATMENT PLANT - 4-2000 GALLONS

Arrival date was July 5 as scheduled. The pool was dug on the Watson Land, a small large tract between Norman Wells and the St. Charles Rapids on the Mackenzie River. I had phoned Mr. Inuit and made arrangements for him to have a crew ready to meet the pool and myself at Inuit and through his efforts the pool was moved to the construction site in front of the Territorial Day School. I had had no sleep while traveling on the Watson Land and July 5 was a day off. On Tuesday through Saturday Mark Inuit, the assistant, and I began construction of the pool and erection of the bubble. Because of poor weather (rain and wind) we were unable to put up the air bubble or do very much on the pool itself. However, by Saturday evening, we began to put water in the pool. But leaks were discovered around both the pool inlet and skimmer & plugged with so consequently we had to drain the pool and we patched over the inlet holes in the liner. The problem about the same last year the holes for the inlets and the skimmer were not cut in the reinforced part of the liner so that water was leaked on the unreinforced part where the holes were cut. Finally on Saturday July 18 we had water in the pool and it was circulating, hoping for a pool opening on Monday, July 19. Unfortunately we had more trouble. The pool was covered up by Monday morning but one of the rubber hoses leading from the pump to the filter had broken. There had been at least 1000 gallons of water pumped onto the ground during the night.

so we had to get more water, repair the break and Wednesday July 22 before we could open the pool. We did open it the pool water was still quite dirty but we couldn't wait any longer before beginning the program.

THE PROGRAM:

Dan Marion, the Recreation Club president, did not have any specific plans for the program so Paul Andrew and myself decided upon the operation of two, two and one-half week pool sessions. Lessons were begun at 9:45 in the morning and continued after lunch until 3:15. Free swimming was broken into two age groups each getting one hour of pool time. We tried to have a one-hour period after supper for youth's swimming but because of the large amounts of water that was splashed out by this group we decided to discontinue this swimming.

Attendance varied but averaged approximately 50% to 60%.

Registered	Tested	Passed	% Pass of those Registered	% Pass of those Tested
38 Pre-Beginners	24	14	37%	58%
10 Beginners	7	7	70%	100%
7 Juniors	7	7	100%	100%
5 Survival	5	5	100%	100%
60 (Total)	43	33	55%	77%

MAINTENANCE:

WATER:

The water in Fort Norman is supplied by water truck. We had 4000 per gallon. The pool used about 100-200 gallons per day for initial fill, of which we had 400. Also, the water was splashed out of the pool and the make-up water had to come from the school. The water tank in the school was next to the pool and unfortunately we ran out of water about having to replenish the supply in the school. Consequently the bubble was too close to the school and the water truck to get next to it so we had to use water from the truck to get water from the trucks to the tank.

The second problem was that of changing rooms. We were not permitted the use of the school to change in so we had to have the kids change at home and come to the pool with their clothes removed and put them back on over the changing trucks.

There was another problem related to the water shortage. Showers were not and could not be provided. The showers were pretty dirty but we had them use water from the truck and use towels to clean off the top 1 year.

Sidewalks consisted of pallets "borrowed" from the school and although they were pretty rough they did the job we wanted them to do.

MAINTENANCE:

Maintenance of the port-a-pool setup was very cheap.

There were few difficulties encountered in the operation of the swimming pool equipment. About one-half hour per day was devoted to this aspect of the pool program.

Vacuuming was done in the mornings. The catch basket was removed from the skimmer and the hose, which had been attached to the vacuum head and subsequently been filled with pool water after the vacuum head had been placed in the pool, was plugged into the suction inlet of the skimmer. After cleaning the hair and lint catcher the following was done. The pump was shut off and the filter valve was set at "close". The vacuum hose was then drained of water and plugged back into the rear inlet hole so that water would not leak out when the lint catcher cover was taken off. After the basket had been cleaned the cover was replaced and tightened down, the hose was removed, the valve set to "filter" and the pump started.

Backwashing was a simple task. The pump was shut off and the filter valve set to "backwash". The pump was then started and the indicator bubble showed when the water was clear.

The chlorinator caused some difficulty in Norman Wells. After finally locating the remainder of last year's chlorine supply in the old fire hall and managing to locate the plastic barrel that was used last year to hold the chlorine solution we found that the chlorinator would operate effectively for 3 or 4 days and then it would plug up. This was due to the fact that part number 2768, a flapper, was not present.

A new part should be ordered. Other than that the chlorinator worked very well.

The heater caused some difficulty in Norman Wells but this was through no fault of its own. I went to work in the morning and found that the heater was not working and the red light on the ignition switch control box was on. This indicates that there is no more fuel left in the drum and therefore more fuel must be pumped from the other drum into the tapped drum. This was done with a wobble pump. However when this routine was completed the heater still would not ignite. We spent two days dismantling and reassembling parts and finally discovered that the diesel fuel we were using was contaminated with water. We changed drums and after that things continued well until the end. During the operation of the pool the heater consumed a total of 300 gallons of fuel. This is almost equal to last year's consumption over a longer period of time. I believe the fact that we had an air bubble and the warmer weather were factors which accounted for the low fuel consumption. The temperature of the water was maintained at between 32° and 84° F.

The chlorinator did not use as much chlorine as last year. This is also the result of having an air bubble which shade the water from the direct rays of the sun which greatly deplete the chlorine content of the water.

Also in line with maintenance, tools were purchased. I.O.L. These were a hammer, screwdriver set, pipe wrench and a crescent wrench and 150' of garden hose.

THE AIR BUBBLE.

The air bubble was without a doubt a very necessary piece of equipment. Temperatures of 37° and 39° F were encountered early in June but inside the air bubble the temperature never dropped below 50°. During the colder weather the bubble kept the inside air temperature approximately 15° to 20° warmer than outside. This was likely due to the retention of heat from the pool water. During the colder days there was a problem of mist and foginess inside. At times it was difficult to see from one end to another but it did not cause any great problem.

One of the difficulties encountered that did set us back about five days in Norman Wells was the zipper. Sand would get on the kids' feet and get caught in the zipper. It was evident that the sand caused the zipper to fail to track and therefore we had no seal on the air bubble. We taped up the door each time we had to replace the zipper and finally we arrived at a solution. The zipper was sewn into a flexible panel about 8" wide and 5 feet long. This panel was attached to the bubble by a fabric called fel-cro which is sometimes called a "magic zipper". It consists of a tape of nylon hooks on the bubble side and a tape of what look like plastic or wool "stubble" on the panel side (i.e. see diagram on following page).

We found that by simply pulling out one side of the fel-cro we avoided the zipper problem and thereby saved both time and money replacing worn-out zippers.

One more problem was the ballast bags. These bags must be filled to their absolute fullest capacity with water if one is to maintain the stability of the bubble. When I arrived the bubble had been up only one day and had already been lifted by the wind. When this happens air pressure inside is reduced and the bubble deflates. This indeed is what happened and resulted in numerous gashes in the bubble (i.e. it caught on the corners of the pool).

Also there is the potential danger of a power failure during a windstorm or thunderstorm. All it would take is one such occurrence and the bubble would be a total loss.

We had one problem with the fan in Norman Wells. The power supply had to be cut off from the pool for about four hours one afternoon. Ryan Peterson brought over a large air compressor to help the bubble to stay up. However the volume of air supplied by the compressor was not sufficient to keep the bubble all the way up. We therefore brought over a welding machine to plug the fan into. However, the fan was AC and the welder was DC. The consequences were disastrous and the remainder of the time in Norman Wells we used a blower fan from a furnace to keep the bubble inflated. It worked very well indeed. The motor of the original fan was sent out to be re-wired and arrived just in time to be taken in working order to Fort Norman.

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COLLIER, Tom

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